



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
LEWISVILLE

Session 9

Sent in the Power of the Spirit

Summary and Goal

During Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. In the Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit came to a prophet temporarily for a specific purpose. For the first time in history, the Holy Spirit came to take up residence in the lives of believers and that changed the church forever.

Main Passages

Acts 2:1-41

Session Outline

1. Filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:1-11)
2. Last Days Calling (Acts 2:12-36)
3. The Answer to Every Person's Question (Acts 2:37-41)

Theological Theme

The Holy Spirit and the gospel message lead us to a place of true repentance and community that will overcome any barriers that would otherwise keep us from it.

Christ Connection

Jesus came to earth and gave up everything, becoming obedient even to death, so that we might be saved. (See Phil. 2:5-11.)

Missional Application

We are called to have the same mindset as Jesus when it comes to offering ourselves to the revolution of God's gospel message to the world.

Historical Context of Acts

Purpose

The Book of Acts emphasizes the work of God through the Holy Spirit in the lives of people who devoted themselves to Jesus Christ, especially Paul as he led the Gentile missionary endeavor. It is no exaggeration to say that the Christian church was built through the dynamic power of the Spirit working through chosen vessels. Another important concept is the radial spread of the gospel from Jews to Gentiles, from Jerusalem to Judea, from Samaria and on to the rest of the world (1:8). Thus Christianity transformed from being a sect within Judaism to a world religion that eventually gained acceptance everywhere, even in the heart of the pagan Roman Empire: Rome itself.

Author

The book of Acts is formally anonymous. The traditional view is that the author was the same person who wrote the Gospel of Luke—Luke the physician and traveling companion of Paul (Col 4:14; 2Tm 4:11; Phm 24). As early as the second century AD, church leaders such as Irenaeus wrote that Luke was the author of Acts. Irenaeus based his view on the “we” passages in Acts, five sections where the author changes from the third person (“he/she” and “they”) to first-person plural (“we”) as he narrates the action (16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–29; 28:1–16). Irenaeus and many scholars since his time have interpreted these passages to mean that the author of Acts was one of the eyewitness companions of Paul. Luke fits this description better than any other candidate, especially given the similar themes between the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.

Setting

The date of composition of the book of Acts is to a large extent directly tied to the issue of authorship. A number of scholars have argued that Acts should be dated to the early 60s (at the time of Paul’s imprisonment). Acts closes with Paul still in prison in Rome (28:30–31). Although it is possible that Luke wrote at a later date, a time when Paul had been released, it is more plausible to think that he completed this book while Paul was still in prison. Otherwise he would have ended the book by telling about Paul’s release.

Special Features

The book of Acts provides a glimpse into the first three decades of the early church (ca AD 30–63) as it spread and multiplied after the ascension of Jesus Christ. It is not a detailed or comprehensive history. Rather, it focuses on the role played by apostles such as Peter, who ministered primarily to Jews, and Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

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Condensed Leader Guide

Sent in the Power of the Spirit

? For Further Discussion

Do you feel as though you are filled with the same Holy Spirit who indwelt the apostles on Pentecost? Explain.

Introduction

- ? When have you had a new opportunity in life but had to wait before you could actually begin (i.e. a new job, getting married, moving to a new city)? How did you feel about waiting? What did you do to prepare in the waiting period?
- ? Are you prone to wait for someone else to do the work of the church or do you engage in that calling yourself? Explain.

Over the last eight weeks, we have studied various times of transition in the Bible and what it means to transition well. None of this is possible apart from the active work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Today, we will look at the coming of the Holy Spirit and the way that enabled the first Christians—and us—to pursue the purpose, plan, power, and priority of the church as the people of the church.

1. Filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:1-11)

The miracle of languages at Pentecost in Acts 2:4 was a unique event God used to formally mark the public beginning of the church and the coming of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus had promised to send to His followers. The wind in verse 2 was not actual wind, but the sound of violent wind, likely deafening and filling the whole house. The sight was like flames of fire that separated and rested on each person there. Both the sound of the wind and the flames of fire are common biblical allusions to God's presence.

? For Further Discussion

Why is coming together in one place a necessary characteristic of the church? How does this help us carry out our calling as a church, particularly in times of transition?

- ? Why is it significant that the disciples were all together in one place on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1)? How did that contribute to the miracle of Pentecost?
- ? According to Acts 2:11, what did the devout Jewish men from every nation under heaven hear in their own tongues (languages)? Why does the content of what the Holy Spirit-empowered followers of Jesus spoke matter?
- ? What does the Holy Spirit's power have to do with us at First Baptist Lewisville fulfilling our God-given calling as a church? Why do we need the Holy Spirit to fulfill our purpose of making disciples?

2. Last Days Calling (Acts 2:12-36)

The Day of Pentecost marked the beginning of the last days before Jesus' return, and we are now also in those last days. (See 1 John 2:18.) As such, Joel's prophecy (see Joel 2:28-32) applies today. The main effect of the power of the Holy Spirit seems to be bold, prophetic speech.

- ❓ What were the two basic reactions of the people who witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?
- ❓ What does the reaction of the people in verse 13 tell us about being filled with the Holy Spirit? Would you say that the way we live out our calling here at First Baptist Lewisville is generally explainable or unexplainable to outsiders?
- ❓ How did Pentecost mark the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy? (See Acts 2:16-21.) How does the fulfillment of this prophecy continue today?

3. The Answer to Every Person's Question (Acts 2:37-41)

While there were certainly still some people who thought that Peter was either crazy or drunk, there were many more who "came under deep conviction." These people did not ignore or dismiss the conviction they felt but allowed their conviction to move them to cry out to the apostles, "Brothers, what must we do?" Peter responded by instructing them to repent from sin and be baptized as a physical sign of what had already happened in their hearts.

- ❓ How did many of the people who heard Peter's sermon respond (v. 37)? How does this encourage us in sharing our faith with others?
- ❓ How did Peter respond to their question (v. 38)? Compare this with Acts 16:31. Did Peter and Paul prescribe different responses to the gospel? How are both of these things tied to Jesus' command in Matthew 28:16-20?
- ❓ Based on these verses, what was the point of the miracles and signs that day?

Conclusion

- ❓ What hope does Pentecost offer First Baptist Lewisville in this time of transition?
- ❓ What are you trying to accomplish through your own power that can only be accomplished through the Holy Spirit's power? How will you rely on Him to do what you could never do on your own?

❓ For Further Discussion

What do you learn about Jesus from David's testimony (shared by Peter) in Acts 2:25-28? What do you think David meant when he said, "my flesh will rest in hope" (Acts 2:26)?

❓ For Further Discussion

What about here at First Baptist Lewisville? How can we guard against trying to accomplish things in our own power in this time of waiting instead of relying on the power of the Holy Spirit? How can we be obedient without allowing waiting to become an excuse?



Expanded Leader Guide

Sent in the Power of the Spirit

Introduction

- ❓ When have you had a new opportunity in life but had to wait before you could actually begin (i.e. a new job, getting married, moving to a new city)? How did you feel about waiting? What did you do to prepare in the waiting period?
- ❓ Are you prone to wait for someone else to do the work of the church or do you engage in that calling yourself? Explain.
- ❓ Do you feel as though you are filled with the same Holy Spirit who indwelled the apostles on Pentecost? Explain.

At the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus told His disciples to wait. He was going to give them—and us—an incredible gift: the presence and power of His Holy Spirit. The disciples couldn't have fully appreciated what all that meant, but they waited nonetheless. When the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, He began to empower Christ's followers for a mission that was unstoppable. From that single location, their mission spread across the world and continues today. The disciples' longing for the Holy Spirit's presence was surely worth the wait.

Over the last eight weeks, we have studied various times of transition in the Bible and what it means to transition well. None of this is possible apart from the active work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Today, we will look at the coming of the Holy Spirit and the way that enabled the first Christians—and us—to pursue the purpose, plan, power, and priority of the church as the people of the church.

1. Filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:1-11)

- Why is it significant that the disciples were all together in one place on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1)? How did that contribute to the miracle of Pentecost?

The miracle of languages at Pentecost in Acts 2:4 was a unique event God used to formally mark the public beginning of the church and the coming of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus had promised to send to His followers. The wind in verse 2 was not actual wind, but the sound of violent wind, likely deafening and filling the whole house. The sight was like flames of fire that separated and rested on each person there. Both the sound of the wind and the flames of fire are common biblical allusions to God's presence.

- Why is coming together in one place a necessary characteristic of the church? How does this help us carry out our calling as a church, particularly in times of transition?



- According to Acts 2:11, what did the devout Jewish men from every nation under heaven hear in their own tongues (languages)? Why does the content of what the Holy Spirit-empowered followers of Jesus spoke matter?

The disciples were sent, but they waited together for God's presence to come upon them before going. (See Acts 1:4,8.) This demonstrates the essential nature of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. As awesome as it was, verses 2-3 would mean nothing without verse 4. The Holy Spirit came upon sent believers then—and comes to sent believers now—to empower them to share the gospel. The Spirit filled the disciples so that they could convey the gospel in every language it needed to be heard in that day.


- What does the Holy Spirit's power have to do with us at First Baptist Lewisville fulfilling our God-given calling as a church? Why do we need the Holy Spirit to fulfill our purpose of making disciples?

The Spirit prompts us to share the gospel. He gives us the words to speak. He fills us with the courage we need. He takes our words and penetrates the hearts of those listening. As individuals and as a church, we are powerless to live out Christ's commands without His Spirit.


2. Last Days Calling (Acts 2:12-36)

-  What were the two basic reactions of the people who witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?
-  What does the reaction of the people in verse 13 tell us about being filled with the Holy Spirit? Would you say that the way we live out our calling here at First Baptist Lewisville is generally explainable or unexplainable to outsiders?

What the Holy Spirit did in and among the believers at Pentecost was unexplainable. The two basic reactions to the Holy Spirit were “Whoa!” and “What?” Both reactions can be barriers to true community. Some are more interested in knowing leaders through whom the Holy Spirit is evident than they are in personally knowing and following Jesus. Others cynically doubt the work of the Holy Spirit in flawed Christ-followers. When we are empowered and sent by the Spirit, though, we know we are sent for a purpose and that purpose is not dependent on how people respond to us.

-  How did Pentecost mark the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy? (See Acts 2:16-21.) How does the fulfillment of this prophecy continue today?


The Day of Pentecost marked the beginning of the last days before Jesus’ return, and we are now also in those last days. (See 1 John 2:18.) As such, Joel’s prophecy (see Joel 2:28-32) applies today. The main effect of the power of the Holy Spirit seems to be bold, prophetic speech.


-  What do you learn about Jesus from David’s testimony (shared by Peter) in Acts 2:25-28? What do you think David meant when he said, “my flesh will rest in hope” (Acts 2:26)?


Peter knew the people could not dispute the point he made from Psalm 16:8-11, which clearly states that the Messiah’s body would not decay. (See Acts 2:25-28). He pointed out that because David’s body had been buried and had not come back to life, the psalm had to be speaking

about someone other than David (see vv. 29-31). Peter asserted that Jesus' death and resurrection proved Him to be David's heir of whom the Scripture spoke. Not only had Jesus been raised from the dead, but also He had been exalted to the right hand of God. As further proof of this, Peter quoted David's statement that the Messiah would sit at God's right hand. (See Ps. 110:1.) Obviously, in his dead body, David had not ascended into the heavens, but Jesus in His resurrected body had. Speaking for the apostles, Peter declared they were witnesses of the resurrection as well as the ascension spoken of in this psalm—the ascension of Jesus to sit at God's right hand to exercise authority over heaven and earth.

3. The Answer to Every Person's Question (Acts 2:37-41)

-  How did many of the people who heard Peter's sermon respond (v. 37)? How does this encourage us in sharing our faith with others?

-  How did Peter respond to their question (v. 38)? Compare this with Acts 16:31. Did Peter and Paul prescribe different responses to the gospel? How are both of these things tied to Jesus' command in Matthew 28:16-20?

-  Based on these verses, what was the point of the miracles and signs that day?

While there were certainly still some people who thought that Peter was either crazy or drunk, there were many more who “came under deep conviction.” These people did not ignore or dismiss the conviction they felt but allowed their conviction to move them to cry out to the apostles, “Brothers, what must we do?” Peter responded by instructing them to repent from sin and be baptized as a physical sign of what had already happened in their hearts. When asked a similar question by the Philippian jailer, Paul responded by saying, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

We should not think of Peter's command to “repent” and Paul's command to “believe” as two separate responses to the gospel. When Jesus preached, He commanded people to “repent and believe the good news” (Mark 1:15). Therefore “to repent” and “to believe” is best understood as two essential aspects of faith. Both Peter and Paul called their hearers to turn away from their former lives and trust Christ alone for salvation.

Conclusion

- ❓ What hope does Pentecost offer First Baptist Lewisville in this time of transition?
- ❓ What are you trying to accomplish through your own power that can only be accomplished through the Holy Spirit's power? How will you rely on Him to do what you could never do on your own?
- ❓ What about here at First Baptist Lewisville? How can we guard against trying to accomplish things in our own power in this time of waiting instead of relying on the power of the Holy Spirit? How can we be obedient without allowing waiting to become an excuse?

Prayer of Response

Thank God for the Holy Spirit. Ask the Spirit to empower you and fill you with His strength to passionately reach those near and far for Christ. Acknowledge the immensity of the mission before you and pray for Him to come and do what only He can do.

Family Discussion

Family Discussion Questions for Children

- *What do you know about the Holy Spirit? What does He help you do?*
- *Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 was an extraordinary event and makes some people think the Holy Spirit's power is not for people today. How might ordinary activities like reading your Bible, praying, and going to church allow the Holy Spirit to work in your life?*

Family Discussion Questions for Teens

- *Aside from this being a time of transition for our church, you're in a stage of life that is, or will soon be, a transition into adulthood. How can being involved at First Baptist Lewisville help you as you wait for that transition to take place?*
- *Are you relying on the Holy Spirit to help you with anything specific right now? What is a situation where you know you don't have the power to do what God can do? What would it look like for you to rely on the Holy Spirit in that situation?*
- *Many people consider the gospel a narrow and exclusive message. How does the gospel actually serve as a bridge over the barriers of language, culture, race, and personality?*

For Next Week

Session Title

- Out of Our Comfort Zones

Main Scripture

- Acts 8:1-40

Session Outline

1. Scattered to Gather (Acts 8:1-8)
2. Opposition Will Come (Acts 8:9-25)
3. Spirit-Led Opportunities (Acts 8:26-40)

Memorize

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

—Acts 2:38

Extended Commentary

Acts 2:1-41

2:1–2. Throughout this book Luke records the togetherness the early Christians enjoyed. Here, at the beginning of everything, we find them all together. They heard a sound like the blowing of a violent wind, certainly an experience with which all of us can identify. The word for wind is *pneuma*, the same word Jesus used in talking about the Spirit and the wind with Nicodemus (John 3:7–8).

Wind filling the whole house reminds us of God's presence filling the temple in the Old Testament. If you live in the south, the midwest, or parts of Canada, you might imagine a tornado inside the house. East coast and Gulf state people might recognize the experience of a hurricane, but again, inside the house. Luke was probably not present for this event, but we can imagine that he heard his colleagues describe it scores of times, for it was a day they could never forget.

2:3. We need to be careful with the language of the text. The sound was not a wind but like a wind. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire. Apparently, the fire started as one and then separated and came upon them. Like wind, the Bible commonly associates fire with the presence of God, as Moses found out one day in the desert (Exod. 3:2). Since this entire experience was highly symbolical, it may not be inappropriate for us to see in the single then multiple fire the unity and diversity in the body of Christ.

2:4. A third physical phenomenon experienced on the Day of Pentecost was the use of different languages. Throughout Acts, Luke uses different verbs to describe the coming of the Spirit upon new believers. This first time was a unique event, never again repeated in exactly the same way. When we look at the entire New Testament teaching on the Holy Spirit, we see the word baptism associated with initial conversion and the word filling with ministry. The first seems to happen once without repetition; the second occurs with frequency as believers allow God's Spirit to produce powerful work through them.

Most evangelical scholars believe the tongues of Pentecost were genuine languages, not the ecstatic sounds Paul dealt with at Corinth (1 Cor. 14:1–12). Two arguments rise strongly to emphasize that these tongues represented languages not previously learned. First, the use of the word *dialektos* in verses 6 and 8 can only refer to a language or dialect. Second, the paragraph that follows (vv. 5–12) specifically emphasizes the fact that people of different languages understood the message of the Christians in their own language.

Some argue for a miracle of hearing as well as speaking in this chapter. The text does not really justify that. On the other hand, when people filled with the Holy Spirit proclaim the gospel, a supernatural ministry always takes place. When the hearers respond, a miracle of understanding certainly follows.

2:5–6. Like Paul, Luke occasionally engages in deliberate exaggeration such as his suggestion that there were pious Jews residing in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven. Probably we should understand him to mean that people speaking many other languages were present on the Day of Pentecost and each heard the message in his or her own language or dialect. We might ask, if they resided in Jerusalem, wouldn't they have understood Aramaic, or at least Greek? Doubtless many of them did; but part of the miracle was God's ability to proclaim his message in multiple languages through uneducated people who spoke almost exclusively Aramaic and Greek.

Some have suggested that the Feast of Pentecost might very well have attracted over two hundred thousand Jews from all over Palestine and the Mediterranean world. Nothing indicates that they heard the wind or saw the flames; but the sound of languages—perhaps dozens of them—captured their attention immediately.

2:7–11. The speakers amazed Jerusalem’s visitors as much as did the language: are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? After the introductory question raised by the bewildered guests, they identified fifteen language groups, roughly scattered from east to west, who heard the believers declaring the wonders of God in their own languages. Luke tells us they were bewildered and perplexed. Twice he used the word amazed. Many of the disciples (all of the eleven) came from Galilee, but that label for the group does not necessarily mean that all 120 came from that province. Jesus was a Galilean, and his followers were therefore known by that group name.

Luke’s list of fifteen geographical locations was a group of nations or areas in which known Jewish populations existed and would likely have sent representative groups to the Feast of Pentecost. Everyone there who spoke a language other than Greek or Aramaic heard the message of the Christians in that language—maybe fifteen languages, maybe fifty, maybe more. The languages differed; the message remained the same: the wonders of God.

2:12–13. What a wonderful question to hear after one has proclaimed the wonders of God. Surely every pastor would like to have a congregation ask about every sermon, What does this mean? Like most congregations, not everyone agreed that this event had significant meaning. Some simply mocked, they have had too much wine (v. 13). This word for wine (*gleukos*), used only here in the Bible, leaves no doubt of the mockers meaning. Peter’s explanation in the following verses says pointedly, These men are not drunk, as you suppose (v. 15). People shocked by a supernatural phenomenon may choose to accept God’s hand at work in his world, or they may turn away and chalk it up to something else. When they make the latter choice, drunkenness offers as good an explanation as any.

2:14–16. Now filled with the Holy Spirit and fresh from the Pentecost experience, Peter found new courage. He commanded immediate attention and addressed his remarks to fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem. Drunkenness? Not a chance. Not at nine in the morning. On feast days a Jew would not break fast until ten.

Most scholars believe Peter spoke in Aramaic, the common dialect of Jerusalem which all there would have understood. It was the third hour of the day, a customary hour of prayer. Peter’s interesting argument may contain a bit of humor. He sounds rather like a pastor saying to a crowd gathered outside the church, “Our deacons aren’t drunk yet—it’s too early for that.” Obviously, there is no intent to indicate that the believers ever became drunk, but to provide a clear-cut, nonchallengeable argument against the charge of drunkenness.

2:17–21. Peter launched into a recitation of Joel 2:28–32 reproduced by Luke from the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint. No doubt Peter saw this passage fulfilled at Pentecost, at least in part. Men and women, young and old who gathered in Jerusalem after the ascension had experienced the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and subsequently proclaimed God’s wonders. Are we to understand that Peter thought the wonders in the heavens of verses 19 and 20 had also been fulfilled at Pentecost? The context implies that the remainder of Joel’s prophecy, the full experience of cosmic wonders, would await the full repentance of God’s chosen nation. Nevertheless, it is part of the passage in Joel, so he thunders on to get to his major theme, And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

In terms of the earthly life and ministry of Jesus, this was the end of the beginning. The Christians will now carry on what he began to do (1:1–2). In terms of the unfolding of the church era however, the New Covenant age, this was the beginning of the end. Prophecy had been renewed in fulfillment after four hundred years. God was at work again among his people—the resurrection and Pentecost had proven that.

What does it mean to be saved? Certainly for Peter the “Lord” in the Joel passage is Jesus Christ. The spokesman for the twelve and all the other believers called all who would listen to turn to the Savior, God’s Messiah, and in doing so, find life through his name. We will see this message and challenge many times in Acts.

2:22–28. The Book of Acts contains twenty-three sermons or speeches, including seven by Peter and eleven by Paul. Verse 22 stands in the middle of Peter’s first public sermon. Verses 14–16 constitute the introduction; verses 17–21 make up the text; verses 22–36 form the body; and verses 38–41 offer the conclusion/application.

2:22. During Jesus’ time on earth his ministry was guaranteed by threefold evidence—miracles, wonders, and signs—precisely the marks of an apostle which Paul identified in 2 Corinthians 12:12. Interestingly, first-century Jews didn’t deny Jesus’ miracles; that seems to be a theological characteristic of more modern times. The key term of the verse is surely the word accredited, used often in first-century Greek for people holding some official office. Jesus’ mighty acts pointed to divine power behind his life and ministry, thereby certifying that he was the Messiah.

2:23. Frequently the New Testament links predestination and free will, the two elements of a divine paradox. God handed over Jesus for crucifixion, but wicked men put him to death. So often people ask, “Does God choose us for salvation, or do we choose to believe the gospel?” Human reason searches for philosophical solutions, but the only biblical answer is a simple yes. Somehow in God’s eternal plan these two seemingly parallel roads come together.

2:24–28. Peter’s sermon progresses well; in typical New Testament form, he comes right to the point: resurrection. Verses 25–35 in this chapter contain four evidences of the resurrection: David’s tomb, the witnesses, that very Day of Pentecost, and the ascension witnessed by the eleven disciples. God may have handed Jesus over for crucifixion, but he also raised him from the dead. As strange as it might seem to the human mind, Messiah’s death was God’s will.

Thus Peter turns to Psalm 16:8–11. Surely readers of the Old Testament up to this point had applied Psalm 16 only to David. Peter, speaking through the Holy Spirit, now certified it as a messianic prophecy. He did not use the psalm to prove the resurrection, but to affirm the messiahship of Jesus. Peter didn’t bother to prove the resurrection at all—he just proclaimed it. God raised Jesus to experience joy in your presence.

2:29–30. Something new has been added. Not only was David’s psalm a messianic prophecy, but the application of the psalm to Jesus is also linked with the fact that the Messiah came in David’s line. David may have considered himself a shepherd and a king, but Peter tells us he was also a prophet, whether aware of it or not. We see here a major key to understanding Scripture, namely—Christ is the unifying link between Old and New Testaments. Luke had already concluded his first report to Theophilus on precisely this point: “Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things’ ” (Luke 24:45–48).

2:31–32. Not only did David understand Jesus' coming, he also foretold his resurrection. Standing in the crowd that day were many local residents who were familiar with the events that had transpired in Jerusalem less than two months earlier. Just in case their memories had lapsed, Peter raised again the broad banner of those courageous early Christians: we are all witnesses of the fact.

2:33–36. Peter wanted to proclaim the whole gospel, so he could not stop at the crucifixion and resurrection. In these verses he moves on to the exaltation and the coming of the Holy Spirit, bringing his listeners right up to the moment. Another quote from the Psalms (110:1) surely must have stabbed their collective attention. The humble carpenter of Nazareth was not only the Messiah, but now he lives in heaven and has caused all the Pentecostal commotion which evoked this sermon in the first place. Showing an enormous confidence in his God and his message, Peter used a phrase appearing only here in the New Testament (all Israel) and hammered home his final point: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. In fine homiletical style he returned to his original text (v. 21) and, along with the prophet Joel, extolled the messiahship of his Lord. The one you think dead is your living Lord, Master, and Messiah!

2:37. The combination of God's Scripture and God's Spirit working through God's servant had the intended effect. From their initial question What does this mean? (2:12), the people now progressed to specific response—Brothers, what shall we do? The phrase cut to the heart translates *katenugesan* meaning "stung" or "stunned." Had some people listening to Peter that day also screamed for blood in Pilate's hall? While the word conviction does not appear in our verse, this clearly reflects that heart attitude. The New Testament uses this word to describe the work of the Holy Spirit by which we see ourselves as we are in God's sight.

2:38–39. Peter hesitated not a moment for the answer to their question, calling for repentance and baptism and offering forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Repentance is not a new theme in the New Testament, having appeared in the ministry of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3) and in the preaching of Jesus (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3). The context shows baptism here refers to water, not the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament, water baptism became the uniform of the Lord's people. Today we call it "believers' baptism," the conscious identification with Jesus on the part of those who have trusted him for salvation. The gift of the Holy Spirit then became the seal of salvation. To whom is this available? For all whom the Lord our God will call.

2:40–41. Luke hastens to tell us we do not have the entire sermon recorded in his book. Peter spoke many other words and pleaded with his hearers who responded. That day God added three thousand people to the small number of believers already serving as Christ's witnesses. But wait. Don't miss the importance of what Luke does not say. This time there was no sound, no flame, and no foreign language. These people received the Holy Spirit because that's what Peter promised in Jesus' name. Pentecost was a one-time event, with only a mild echo or two appearing elsewhere during the first century.

Are we to believe that Peter baptized three thousand people on that one day? Of course not. The Bible knows no hierarchical system whereby people must be baptized at the hand of some official or titled clergy. We should probably assume all 120 believers assisted in this magnificent demonstration.

In the space of just a few verses, we see what happens when people trust Christ for salvation. First, they must recognize their need; then, they must receive God's gift; and finally, they must obey the message.